Introduction of Superfast Train Between New Delhi and Kanyakumari

6822. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to introduce a Superfast Train between New Delhi/ Nizamuddin and Kanyakumari via Madurai, Erode, Jolarpet, Renigunta, Gudur, Nagpur to cater to the needs to the people of Southern Tamil Nadu who have no direct train link with the capital, in the near future; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) above be in the negative, what other steps are being proposed by Government to help the Delhi Tamil population from Southern Tamil Nadu to visit their home towns?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF) (a) There is no proposal at present.

(b) 6017/6018 Himsagar Express already provides direct service between New Delhi and Kanniyakumari. The Passengers travelling between Delhi and Southern Tamil Nadu can avail Changeover facilities at Madras or Erode Jn.

Appointment of Railway Booking Service Agents

6823. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Railway Booking Service Agents were appointed in the Past;

(b) if so, the details of such appointments made in each year zone-wise from the date of launching this scheme;

(c) whether some criteria about eligibility and formality have been prescribed while appointing such Agents;

(d) if so, the details thereof with charges fixed and duration of such appointments;

(c) whether some quota of such appointments has been fixed for blind or for wards of blind people;

(f) if so, the detail thereof and if not the reasons therefor;

(g) whether Government propose to privatise the reservation and booking of railway tickets work; and

(h) if so, the details thereof with guidelines to be issued in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) to (h) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

Allocation of Funds for Passenger Amenities

6824. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether customers' satisfaction by increasing amenities to passengers has been one of the thrust areas under the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, whether the thrust in bringing about improvement/increasing amenities to passengers made any headway/ achieved and if so, the details thereof,

(c) how much money was spent on passengers amenities during the year 1993-94 and how much money is proposed to be spent during the year 1994-95; and

(d) the reasons for less outlay of funds towards passengers amenities during 1994-95?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. An Action Plan to remove all deficiencies in respect of the basic passenger amenities at various stations as existing on 1.4.91 has been taken up. Works in this regard are targetted for completion by 31.3.1995. Also, over and above the basic amenities at each station, additional amenities,